Chapter 4

Special Qualities

This chapter describes the intrinsic qualities of the Maryland Historic National Road Scenic Byway.

Intrinsic Qualities of the Byway

The character of the Maryland Historic National Road Scenic Byway contrasts sharply with today's modern interstate highways. The cross-section through cultural groups and physiographic regions, the layering of history, the scenic views, and natural resources all work together to create a unique travel experience. The Byway follows the topography, approaching ridges on an angle and registering every slight rise and fall of the land. This quality is especially apparent on the open road. When the Byway passes through historic old towns, the stone and brick buildings line right up against the sidewalk, forming a distinctive streetscape. The recognition of these patterns contributes greatly to an appreciation of the National Road corridor and its significance for the people who lived, worked, and traveled along it a long time ago.

This chapter begins with a definition of the Byway corridor, followed by a presentation of the Byway's intrinsic historical and cultural qualities. The regionally significant scenic, recreational, and natural qualities are also presented to provide a complete description of the corridor. Since farmland provides a great deal of the scenic quality of the corridor east of Allegany County, state agricultural easements and targeted Rural Legacy Areas are presented together with the scenic qualities. Scenic state forests traversed by the Byway in Allegany and Garrett Counties, on the other hand, are covered in the section under recreational resources because of the superb recreational opportunities they provide. The state parks and forests are not included in the section on natural resources since the forests contain little old growth, having been almost completely cut-over by the early 20th century. Indeed, the Byway's natural qualities are limited, due in part to the successful settlement along the route encouraged by its presence.

While there may in fact be a wealth of archeological resources in the Byway corridor, they are currently hidden and it was not possible to present them in this plan.

Corridor Definition

Maryland's Historic National Road Scenic Byway corridor shall include:

- The road itself and associated public right-of-way (from downtown Baltimore to the western Maryland line), including preceding routes and original and modified alignments over time;
- The "viewshed" (lands that can be seen from the roadway--in most cases up to a maximum of two miles except for unusual panoramas), and in the urban sections, the "streetscape," including those built elements and features along adjacent properties that contribute to the experience of the Byway; and
- Tourism-oriented destinations whose primary travel directions include travel along the Byway.

The immediate road and road right-of-way includes the Maryland State Highway Administration right-of-way and properties pertaining to the roadway. Former alignments must be in the public right-of-way to be incorporated into the Byway corridor. This definition of the corridor will be used for road safety, maintenance, and enhancement issues, as well as providing opportunities for interpretation (along old remnants) and non-motorized travel.

The viewshed area includes all areas visible to those utilizing the Maryland Historic National Road Scenic Byway (Figures 4-1 and 4-2). The limits of the view are determined by landform. A viewshed map was prepared using a geographic information system and digital elevation model to determine the extent of land visible from the Byway. The first viewshed analysis was generally limited to two miles. This viewshed is considered the backdrop to a visit along the Byway. Typically, this land may not be noticed until a change occurs to the landscape (e.g. a cell tower, a new subdivision, an estate home, or a quarrying operation). Once change occurs, then a high degree of concern may be expressed by visitors and residents alike who had not anticipated the visual impact of the change. Within two miles, most "standard" types of development can be perceived (such as those described above). Beyond two miles, it is more difficult to perceive the change due to the effects of distance.

From ridgelines and other particularly scenic points, the distance that can be seen is much greater. The succession of ridges west of Hancock all yield spectacular views of great distances. However, change must be of a greater magnitude to be perceived by an average viewer. The cut through Sideling Hill for I-68 is an example of land use change that can be clearly seen from the Tonoloway Ridge, approximately four miles east. Given the higher degree of concern by members of the CAG about panoramic views, a second viewshed analysis was prepared as part of the resource inventory. This second analysis mapped the viewsheds of panoramic and other high quality views identified by CAG members and the study team. The viewshed mapping was extended from two to ten miles for the second analysis.

Figure 4-1 Corridor Definition Map, western half (Placeholder page - Remove after inserting map)

Figure 4-2 Corridor Definition Map, eastern half (Placeholder page - Remove after inserting map)

The viewshed analyses were later used as a guide for determining priorities for land conservation activities. Figures 4-1 and 4-2 identify the extent of the viewshed associated with the Maryland Historic National Road Scenic Byway Corridor. The maps show the two levels of analysis: (1) the lighter shading indicates a bare terrain viewshed analysis encompassing all lands potentially visible from the Byway within a two-mile radius of the road; (2) the darker shading indicates the landforms that are visible for up to ten miles from the high quality viewpoints along the Byway. The green asterisk symbols indicate the location of the high quality views. See Chapter 5, page 5-10 for more information on special views.

The tourist facilities and points of interest throughout the corridor include any tourist facility or point of interest whose primary travel directions are given from the Byway or require use of the Byway to get there. Side trips lead visitors to destinations that increase their length of stay. There are already several side trips listed in the Maryland Scenic Byways Guide. New side trips should be considered when relevance to the recommended interpretive themes can be demonstrated.

Some rigor is required in enforcing these criteria, as any shrewd business owner will see the benefit of being included on a map of related destinations to the Byway. However, including unrelated side trips for sheer economic benefit may impact the credibility of the Byway and referrals or repeat visits.

Historic Significance of the Byway

This section documents the historic qualities of the Maryland Historic National Road Scenic Byway. The Byway incorporates a legacy of physical resources and cultural traditions from a time when the reputation of America as a nation of travelers was born — during the early 19th century, when the National Road corridor was at the height of its importance. The surviving resources in the corridor tell a wonderfully complete story about that time. Visitors to the Byway have an unusual opportunity to step back in time and contemplate what it was like for those who were part of the new and expanding nation.

Overview of Historic Resources

The National Road corridor's history can be divided into several time periods, from the "contact period" between Native Americans and Europeans to the present day. Nestled within that long history are the three periods that represent the most significant time in the Byway's history: the Heyday of the National Road (1810-1850); Agriculture and Trade (1850-1910); and the Revival of the National Road (1910-60). Each of these three periods tells a unique story that contributes to the road's historical significance.

To gather information about the historic qualities of the corridor, field work was conducted to determine if the corridor's surviving resources and cultural legacy currently reflect the most significant periods in the route's history. In addition, existing historic research about the road was reviewed. The two volume set entitled *The National Road* and *A Guide to the National Road,* edited by Karl Raitz and published in 1996 by Johns Hopkins University Press, was consulted extensively. Information was also gleaned from local residents in the form of the CAG photo assignments and tours (see Chapter 3).

Figure 4-3 Examples of symbols used on the Scenic Byway Features maps: yellow circles on a black square are from the "Heyday' era (left); green squares with no border are from the "Agriculture and Trade" era (middle); and, blue squares with a black border are from the "Revival" period (right). Symbols reflect the different type of resources associated with each era.

Figures 4-51 through 4-55 at the end of the chapter highlight the significant historic features of the Byway corridor as they relate to the travel experience of the route. While not an exhaustive inventory of every historic structure along the route, the inventory introduces representative types of historic features along the road. An interested "reader of the landscape" will easily begin to see an overlapping pattern of eras. Ultimately, this information can be incorporated into interpretation along the road.

In order to correlate the major historic features observed in the field with existing historic inventories, both current National Register and Maryland Inventory data, obtained from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, were analyzed. Whenever possible, historic resources have been identified by name on the maps, using these extensive databases. Additional inventory work is recommended to establish an historic context statement for the corridor, identify National Register-eligible architectural and archeological sites and historic districts along the corridor, identify new architectural properties and archeological resources associated with the route, and to update existing documentation on related resources.

The symbols (Figure 4-3) used on the features maps shown at the end of the chapter were coded to reflect three major periods in the route's history, discussed below. Coded symbols were chosen to make it easier to see the highly braided geographic distribution of the resources along the corridor.

These three periods are representative of trends in American history. While each of the distinct eras can be seen at any one time and place by the careful traveler, the inventory and symbols have been designed to make it easier for the casual visitor to interpret ways in which the Byway and the communities and people along it were transformed by changes in technology and transportation. The three eras are the following:

Heyday of the National Road, 1810-1850
The national trend represented by this period is westward settlement. During this period, the Byway corridor was the primary east-west road corridor through the state of Maryland, and a major gateway to the "Old Northwest" (today's Midwestern states). In

addition to the issue of settlement, it is important to consider the role of the workers and financiers who built the route. Another important aspect of this period is the story of those who traveled on the route, and the tavern keepers, wheelwrights, blacksmiths, and stable owners who served them.

Agriculture and Trade, 1850-1910
During this period, the mechanization of agriculture and the expansion of commerce and industry into rural areas was a nationwide phenomenon. The Byway represents this period well through the survival of many Victorian manors, historic commercial cores, and well-maintained farmsteads seen from the road.

Revival of the National Road, 1910-1960
The modern story of America is tied to the increasing popularity of the automobile and its associated culture. The hotels, road houses, and garages found throughout the Byway corridor are evidence of the pervasive influence of the automobile. Many of these resources are not yet listed in the National Register.

Although the time between 1810 and 1960 is the most significant era in the corridor's history, it is also instructive to understand what happened before the roads were built, and after the construction of the US Route 40 bypass in the mid-1960s. This information helps establish and complete the story of the byway related to patterns of travel. This brief overview is organized chronologically, beginning with the "contact" period (1700-1810), continuing with the three major periods of significance (1810-1960), and ending with the recent past (1960-present).

Native American and European Settlement before 1810

Native Americans frequently traveled through this region on their annual migratory treks between hunting and fishing areas. Portions of the corridor cross significant Native American paths, including the Five Nations Trail that connected central New York to the Carolina mountains. The first Europeans to venture into the region were frontiersmen such as Thomas Cresap. Beginning in the mid-18th century, Europeans began moving southward from Pennsylvania and westward from the Chesapeake Bay. During this time, they did not settle in towns, but in a few isolated plantations. Some of these estates survive today. The opening of new lands for settlement created business opportunities for surveyors and speculators such as George Washington, who is known to have traveled through this area before the American Revolution. A Maryland historical marker commemorates his relatively uneventful 1769 visit to the home of a certain "Mr. Flint," who lived near Hancock.

Associated Resources

- Native American Trails: Nemacolin's Path, named for the Delaware Indian who helped open it, was a trail located for the Ohio Company in 1751. It used parts of an existing network of Native American

trails to get from Cumberland to "the Ohio country." The path is widely believed to have been the basis for Braddock's Road (see below). Evidence of Native American activity in the corridor also survives in scores of place names, such as Conococheague and Allegany.

- Braddock's Road: Fragments of this road, widened or blazed by the British General Edward Braddock's officers in 1755, can be located in old fields and parking lots near the National Road corridor in western Allegany and Garrett counties (Figure 4-4). Originally, Braddock's Road was the recommended route for the proposed Cumberland (National) Road, but the slopes of the road were too steep to comply with the maximum grades set by Congress (Raitz 127). There is currently great archeological and historical interest in uncovering and preserving Braddock's Road (see sidebar).

- European Residential and Farm Buildings: A few isolated resources associated with early settlement by Europeans exist throughout the corridor. Many of these resources are farmhouses that may have served as roadside stops for early travelers. An example includes Clear View Farm, located between West Friendship and Cooksville.

- Forts: Forts were built as staging ground (Fort Cumberland) and as protection against the Native Americans (Fort Frederick), during the French and Indian War. The battles never arrived, however.

- Folklore: Legend says that Negro Mountain (Figure 4-4) was named for a slave (a butler or valet; or possibly a scout or ranger) of settler Thomas Cresap's, named Nemesis, who was killed in a battle with Native Americans in 1756. He is said to be buried on Negro Mountain.

Heyday of the National Road, 1810-50

In the late eighteenth century, as the population of the United States began to grow, President Thomas Jefferson convinced the US Congress to undertake a massive investment in new territory to the west. In 1803, the Louisiana Purchase more than doubled the size of the United States. Almost immediately, Jefferson dispatched Lewis and Clark on their mission to explore the new territory. At the same time, closer to home, he encouraged the development of a transportation infrastructure that would connect the eastern seaboard with points further inland. The construction of the National Road westward from Cumberland was the first such investment by the federal government. The building of the National Road was a political gesture that spoke to the desire of Congress to unite a diverse country into one and encourage the "flow of Jeffersonian ideals" into new territory (Raitz 7). It may also have been an attempt to unite the Old Northwest with the rest of the US, keeping in mind the vague and shadowy machinations of Burr and Wilkinson in these times (Jack Caruthers, local historian).

NEMACOLIN'S PATH AND BRADDOCK'S ROAD

For over a year, regional historians, several state agency personnel, and the Western Maryland Archeology Chapter of the Archeology Society have been researching and retracing the steps of General Braddock.

Diaries, maps, journals, records of previous expeditions, and other resources and means have been utilized to document and locate this route – one not only followed by Nemacolin and Braddock, but the colonial era settlers who followed them prior to the opening of the National Road. Artifacts (horseshoes and nails), as well as such vestiges of this era as deep wagon-wheel ruts/impressions imbedded in stone, have been discovered.

These efforts are now gaining attention, and several magazines and other media outlets, including PBS, have contacted the Society and are undertaking on-site visits. National Geographic sent a writer and a photographer to walk the trail with the Western Maryland Archeological Society's lead researcher on this subject.

Portions of this trail have been destroyed and are now forever lost. Other segments are in private-hands, while significant portions are in public-ownership and accessible. Efforts are being undertaken to acquire or gain access (easement) to some privately held portions of the trail that would enhance the interpretation, visitor or hiking/ recreational experience. There are also some strong possibilities of linking this trail to other hiking/ recreational corridors or greenways.

(For more preservation and conservation actions, see section beginning page 6-16).

Figure 4-4 Braddock's Road is located in the center of this photo near Negro Mountain. (photo by John Grant)

Figure 4-5 Drovers' Barn, Poplar Springs (photo by Jane B. Fleming)

Figure 4-6 Tomlinson Inn, west of Piney Grove, better known as the Stone House, located at Little Meadows.

Figure 4-7 LaVale Toll House, last remaining National Road toll house in Maryland.

The construction of an "eastern connection" from Baltimore to Cumberland started before construction on the National Road had begun. This early start had a practical purpose: connecting the burgeoning population of Baltimore with new markets to the west. Between 1790 and 1830, the city's population increased from 16,000 to 80,000 (Raitz 34). Without a road, the region's prosperity would not be assured. The turnpikes were constructed by several private companies.

In the 1830s, the Federal government gave the road back to the State of Maryland. Before it took ownership of the corridor, the state insisted "that all bridges and culverts must be of stone" (Raitz 74). Changes were on the way though. Within just a few years railroads extended as far west as Cumberland. The most important era in the life of the National Road was about to come to an end.

Associated Resources

- Inns, Homes and Mills: Like most transportation corridors at the time, the National Road corridor was served by a series of taverns which were located about a mile apart. Early hotels not only provided accommodations for travelers and drivers, but drovers' barns for the horses, pigs, etc. For example, the drovers' barn, which stood behind the old Poplar Springs Hotel, is a vulnerable resource (Figure 4-5). The hotel itself is no longer standing. These stopovers were essential to the road's function as a transportation corridor. They also inspired much of the lore that is associated with corridors like these. Examples include the South Mountain Inn, which still survives at Turner's Gap, although it has been significantly altered. The Flintstone Hotel is another important example. It opened in 1807. Flintstone was one of many towns that enjoyed brief popularity as a "springs" resort. Other examples include the Tomlinson Inn, also known has the Stone House (Figure 4-6), west of Piney Grove, and the Casselman Inn in Grantsville. Examples of early homes include the three stone buildings east of Turner's Gap, on the south side of the road.

- Toll Houses: The Federal government constructed toll houses before the states took over the road. Within the State of Maryland, very few toll houses were constructed along the National Road. Maryland's sole remaining toll house on the National Road has been restored and is open to the public, surrounded by a small county park (Figure 4-7). Tolls were collected here from 1835 or 1836 until the late 19th century. Two iron gateposts thirteen miles west of Cumberland mark the spot where another toll house once stood. The LaVale Toll House is now surrounded by 20th century commercial development, but still occupies a commanding site when viewed by travelers heading west. National Pike toll facilities were also constructed during this period (see below under Stone Bridges).

- Small Farmsteads: Farms built during this period tend to be small in scale, because farm technology consisted of men, animals, and plows. Catonsville, near Baltimore City and originally part of an area called Hunting Ridge, was a small farming community in the 1700s. Only a handful of farms from this era still remain.

- Stone Bridges: The bridges built along the Byway corridor represent the state of the art in early 19th century engineering. Bridges were built for both the National Road as well as the private connecting pikes to the east. Although it no longer survives, the Jug Bridge over the Monocacy River in Frederick was an important landmark along the road. It was named for a decorative "jug" that memorialized the contributions that people made toward the construction of the bridge. The bridge survived as an active river crossing until it collapsed in 1942 (Figure 4-8). The jug was moved to a wayside park about a mile to the east. A toll house associated with the National Pike is still extant on the western edge of the bridge. This toll house is privately owned, but is currently for sale. Preserving this toll house is an early action priority for Frederick County (see Chapter 6).

  Wilson Bridge, a five-arch stone bridge over Conococheague Creek, is one of several significant surviving bridges along the corridor (Figure 4-9). It marked the dividing line between two turnpikes: on the east side of the bridge was the Hagerstown and Boonsboro Turnpike, and on the west was the Cumberland Turnpike. This bridge was built in 1819 and almost destroyed in 1983. Author Charles Farmer notes that this bridge "is a reminder of the high level of aesthetics, engineering, and craftwork associated with the Road's construction" (Raitz 55).

  The best-known and most magnificent National Road stone bridge in Maryland is the bridge at Little Crossings, called the Casselman River Bridge, built on a tributary of the Youghiogheny River in 1813 (Figure 4-10). This structure was the longest span of any stone bridge in the nation at the time of its construction, between 1814 and 1817. A mill on the site began operation in 1797. The bridge has been preserved as part of the Casselman River Bridge State Park.

- Places of Worship: Religious buildings were a consistent feature of the National Road corridor since its beginnings. Some of the most architecturally significant buildings along the Byway are the churches built during the early 19th century. Examples include the St. Peter's Episcopal Church west of Ellicott City and St. Joseph's Monastery in Irvington (Figure 4-11).

- Monuments, Memorials, and Markers: This category refers to the large variety and abundance of state markers, private memorials, and cemeteries which stand sentry along the Byway, providing additional historic context for the traveler. Examples from this era

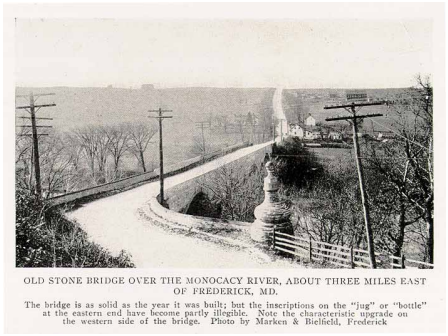

Figure 4-8 Historic photo of "Old Stone Bridge Over the Monocacy River" – the Jug has been relocated to Exit 56 off of I-70.

Figure 4-9 Wilson Bridge

Figure 4-10 Leo Beachy photograph of the Casselman River Bridge at Little Crossings. Beachy hailed from Grantsville.